United Nations CEDAW/C/2003/I/4

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

Distr.: General
13 November 2002

Original: English

Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women
Twenty-eighth session
13-31 January 2003
Item 8 of the provisional agenda*
Ways and means of expediting the work of the Committee

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Report of the Secretariat

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* CEDAW/C/2003/I/1.

** The document was submitted late to the conference services without the explanation required under paragraph 8 of General Assembly resolution 53/208 B, by which the Assembly decided that, if a report is submitted late, the reasons should be included in a footnote to the document.

02-69359 (E) 171202

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I. Introduction

1. The present report contains information that is relevant to the work of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. Section II provides information on developments in the United Nations human rights regime, including information on the fourteenth meeting of the chairpersons of human rights treaty bodies and on the first inter-committee meeting of the human rights treaty bodies. Section III addresses the Committee's long-term programme of work regarding general recommendations, while section IV recalls decisions taken at the Committee's twenty-seventh session regarding consideration of reports by the Committee and constructive dialogue with States parties. Section V presents information on the reports to be considered by the Committee at future sessions. Section VI contains information on the efforts of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women and the Director of the Division for the Advancement of Women of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs to encourage universal ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, ratification of its Optional Protocol, timely reporting, and acceptance of the amendment to article 20, paragraph 1, of the Convention.

2. A list of States parties to the Convention whose reports are five years or more overdue is contained in annex I. A list of States parties whose reports have been submitted but not yet considered by the Committee, together with the date of receipt of those reports, is contained in annex II. A list of States parties that have signed, ratified or acceded to the Optional Protocol is contained in annex III, and a list of States parties that have accepted the amendment to article 20, paragraph 1, is contained in annex IV. A list of States that have not yet ratified or acceded to the Convention is contained in annex V, and annex VI contains an extract (points of agreement and recommendations reached by participants) from the report of the first inter-committee meeting of human rights treaty bodies.

II. Developments in the human rights regime

A. Human rights treaty bodies

Human Rights Committee

3. At its seventy-fourth session, held from 18 March to 5 April 2002, the Human Rights Committee adopted a procedure for follow-up to concluding observations[1] pursuant to rule 70, paragraph 5, and rule 70A[2] of its rules of procedure. The Committee noted that information pursuant to rule 70, paragraph 5, of the rules of procedure, which provides that the Committee may request a State party to give priority to aspects of its concluding observations, need not be requested in respect of all States parties to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights[3] whose reports are examined by the Committee, and the Committee must be mindful of the substantial additional workload that the analysis of information submitted will entail and focus on the urgency of the concern addressed to the State party, as well as the State party's ability to take remedial action within a limited time frame. Country rapporteurs are also to bear this in mind when preparing draft concluding observations.

4. This procedure provides for the designation by the Committee of a Special Rapporteur for Follow-up on Concluding Observations, who is tasked with examining the follow-up information received from a given State party pursuant to the Committee's request and submitting his or her findings to the Committee. The Committee is to set aside sufficient time for discussion of the Special Rapporteur's findings and the adoption of formal recommendations, if any, including, where appropriate, reconsideration of the due date for submission of the next periodic report of the State party. In order to address cases in which States parties do not submit follow-up information before expiry of the one-year time limit, (a) the secretariat will contact the States parties concerned in an informal manner approximately two months prior to the deadline, with a view to ascertaining whether a submission can be expected; (b) a written reminder will be sent to the States parties concerned within one month following the deadline; and (c) if no follow-up submission is received in spite of the reminder, this will be recorded in the Committee's subsequent annual report to the General Assembly. This procedure is already being implemented, and Maxwell Yalden has been designated Special Rapporteur for Follow-up on Concluding Observations.

5. Also at its seventy-fourth session, the Human Rights Committee adopted decisions on working methods,[4] pursuant to which, inter alia, country report task forces will be established. Under these decisions, all members of the Committee will normally be asked to serve on at least one task force per session, and each task force will consist of no fewer than four and, where possible, five or six members, including at least one member from the region and the country rapporteur. The members of a task force are to receive the list of issues on the relevant State party's report, prepared by the country rapporteur in cooperation with the secretariat, and may transmit comments for proposed amendments and additions to the list to the country rapporteur. The members of a task force are to have the main responsibility for the conduct of debates on a State's report, it being understood that after the relevant delegation has answered the questions of members of the task force, other members of the Committee will have the opportunity to intervene. With regard to concluding observations, an initial draft is to be circulated to all members of the Committee for written comments to the task force or country rapporteur, who will prepare the final draft.

6. A meeting was held from 27 to 29 August 2002 in Quito, on follow-up to the concluding observations of the Human Rights Committee, organized by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in cooperation with the Government of Ecuador. At its seventy-sixth session, from 21 October to 8 November 2002, the Committee held a second informal meeting with representatives of States parties to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights to discuss, inter alia, the Committee's new procedure for follow-up to concluding observations, difficulties encountered by States parties in meeting their reporting obligations, and changes in the working methods of the Committee. The Human Rights Committee has begun work on a general comment concerning article 2 of the Covenant.[5]

Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

7. On 13 May 2002, during its twenty-eighth session (from 29 April to 17 May 2002), the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights held its annual day of discussion on article 3 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and

Cultural Rights (on the equal right of men and women to the enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights set forth in the Covenant). Two members of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women participated in the discussion. On 10 May 2002, the Committee held a meeting, organized in cooperation with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), on follow-up to the Committee's day of discussion on the right to education (article 13 of the Covenant) and to UNESCO's World Education Forum, held in Dakar in April 2000. Also in May 2002, the Committee held its first meeting with States parties to the Covenant to discuss methods of work of the Committee and other issues of common interest and concern.

Committee on the Rights of the Child

8. At its thirtieth session, from 20 May to 7 June 2002, the Committee on the Rights of the Child adopted a general recommendation, under organization of work, regarding the content and size of State reports, in which it, inter alia, decided to review in the near future its guidelines for periodic reporting in order to encourage States parties to the Convention on the Rights of the Child[6] not to submit overly lengthy periodic reports and requested them to submit concise periodic reports, not exceeding 120 pages, that are analytical and focus on key implementation issues.

9. During its thirty-first session, from 16 September to 4 October 2002, the Committee adopted its second general comment on the role of national human rights institutions in promoting and protecting children's rights. The Committee's annual day of discussion, held on 20 September 2002, focused on the private sector as service provider and its role in implementing children's rights.

Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

10. At its sixtieth session, from 4 to 22 March 2002, the Committee adopted its general recommendation 28, on follow-up to the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance. During its sixty-first session, from 5 to 23 August 2002, the Committee held a thematic discussion on the concept of descent as provided in article 1 of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, and also adopted its general recommendation 29, on descent-based discrimination. This general recommendation addresses, inter alia, discrimination suffered by women belonging to descent-based communities and recommends that the States parties to the Convention:

(a) Take into account, in all programmes and projects planned and implemented and in measures adopted, the situation of women members of the communities, as victims of multiple discrimination, sexual exploitation and forced prostitution;

(b) Take all measures necessary in order to eliminate multiple discrimination including, descent-based discrimination against women, particularly in the areas of personal security, employment and education;

(c) Provide disaggregated data for the situation of women affected by descent-based discrimination.

Committee against Torture

11. At its twenty-eighth session, from 29 April to 17 May 2002, the Committee adopted amended rules of procedure (see CAT/C/3/Rev.4). The amended rules allow

for the Committee to review the situation in a State party in the absence of a report (rule 65, para. 3); set out possible courses of action to be taken by the Committee in the event a State party fails to send a representative to the session at which its report will be examined (rule 66, para. 2); and provide that the Committee may appoint one or more rapporteurs for follow-up to the Committee's conclusions and recommendations (rule 68, para. 1).

B. Fourteenth meeting of the chairpersons of human rights treaty bodies

12. The fourteenth meeting of the chairpersons of human rights treaty bodies was held from 24 to 26 June 2002. The Chairperson of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, Charlotte Abaka, was elected Chairperson/ Rapporteur of the meeting.

13. The chairpersons discussed matters of common interest and also held meetings with the expanded Bureau of the Commission on Human Rights at its fifty-eighth session and with the Chairperson of the Subcommission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights at its fifty-third session. They also met with representatives of United Nations specialized agencies and non-governmental organizations, convened a joint meeting with representatives of the special procedures system of the Commission on Human Rights and held an informal consultation with representatives of States parties.

14. Recommendations adopted by the meeting of Chairpersons included that the inter-committee meeting of human rights treaty bodies be held every two years, preferably for a period of three or four days, following the chairpersons' meeting; that the second inter-committee meeting be held in 2004, provided that resources are available; and that the agenda of that meeting and the question of whether the meeting should be public or private be decided at the fifteenth meeting of chairpersons. The chairpersons recommended that a limited number of substantive topics be selected for discussion at future meetings with United Nations departments, specialized agencies, funds, programmes and mechanisms, national human rights institutions and non-governmental organizations concerning the national-level implementation of treaty body recommendations. They also recommended that the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights explore ways of financially supporting the presence of representatives of the special procedures system of the Commission on Human Rights at treaty body sessions. The chairpersons felt that there was a need for closer cooperation with the Subcommission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights, including the possibility of treaty bodies proposing to the Subcommission topics within their respective mandates on which in-depth research would yield benefits.

C. First inter-committee meeting of the human rights treaty bodies

15. Pursuant to a recommendation made by the chairpersons of the human rights treaty bodies during their thirteenth meeting, in June 2001, to hold a meeting to consider the subject of methods of work and reservations to the human rights treaties, the first inter-committee meeting of the human rights treaty bodies was held

from 26 to 28 June 2002. The aim of the meeting was to provide recommendations to each of the treaty bodies on these issues.

16. Charlotte Abaka, Chairperson of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, and Ivanka Corti and Aída González Martínez, also representing the Committee, attended the meeting. Charlotte Abaka was elected Chairperson/Rapporteur of the meeting.

17. The participants in the meeting discussed the aims and objectives of the meeting, noting that while it was up to each committee to decide on its methods of work, the value of the inter-committee forum was the opportunity to exchange views and experiences and to formulate agreed recommendations that could then be discussed in each committee. Issues discussed included reporting by States parties, consideration of reports of States parties, concluding observations and comments, opportunities for further cooperation and collaboration, and future inter-committee meetings. In its general observation and recommendations, the meeting recommended, inter alia, that, taking account of the universality, indivisibility and interdependence of human rights, treaty bodies should work together in a complementary way in order to underline the holistic nature of the human rights treaty framework, and observed that such collaboration should be enhanced through, inter alia:

(a) Collaborative days of general debate or general discussion;

(b) Formulation, where appropriate, of joint statements, particularly with respect to United Nations conferences and summits;

(c) Formulation of joint general comments or recommendations by two or more treaty bodies, the subject of which could be discussed in future inter-committee meetings, where appropriate;

(d) Circulation of draft general comments or recommendations to other treaty bodies for input;

(e) Cross-reference, where appropriate, to pertinent comments of other treaty bodies in concluding observations and comments;

(f) Information and input from non-governmental organizations, critical to the effective functioning of the United Nations treaty body system.

18. An extract from the report of the meeting (HRI/ICM/2002/3), which sets out the points of agreement and recommendations reached by the participants, is contained in annex VI to the present report. The Committee may wish to consider these recommendations with a view to formulating its views on them for the fifteenth meeting of chairpersons of human rights treaty bodies in 2003, which, pursuant to those recommendations, is to decide on the agenda of the second inter-committee meeting on the basis of the views of each treaty body.

D. Reform proposals for treaty bodies

19. The report of the Secretary-General submitted to the General Assembly at its fifty-seventh session entitled "Strengthening of the United Nations: an agenda for further change" (A/57/387) addresses human rights treaty bodies. The report indicates that the existing treaty bodies and human rights mechanisms and procedures constitute a large and intricate network, and that the growing complexity

of the human rights machinery and the corresponding burden of reporting obligations strain the resources of Member States and the Secretariat. The report states that the current structure of human rights committees imposes difficult reporting demands on treaty signatories. Two measures are suggested to help alleviate the shortcomings of the current system: first, the committees should craft a more coordinated approach to their activities and standardize their varied reporting requirements; second, each State should be allowed to produce a single report summarizing its adherence to the full range of international human rights treaties to which it is a party. The report states that the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights will consult with treaty bodies on new, streamlined reporting procedures and submit his recommendations to the Secretary-General by September 2003.[7]

E. Subcommission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights

20. The Subcommission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights, at its fifty-fourth session, held from 29 July to 16 August 2002, adopted a number of resolutions and decisions relevant to the work of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, including resolution 2002/26, on traditional practices affecting the health of women and the girl child, and resolution 2002/29, on systematic rape, sexual slavery and slavery-like practices.

21. By its resolution 2002/27, on the report of the Working Group on Contemporary Forms of Slavery, the Subcommission recommended that the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, when examining the reports of States parties, give particular attention to the implementation of article 6 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, and include in its general comments and recommendations an item concerning contemporary forms of slavery.

22. In its decision on affirmative action (see E/CN.4/Sub.2/2002/L.32), having considered the final report of the Special Rapporteur on the concept and practice of affirmative action, Marc Bossoyt, the Subcommission decided to entrust Lammy Betten with the task of preparing a working paper on the impact of affirmative action on the full participation in national life of disadvantaged people, including women, and on the question of developing guidelines for the implementation of affirmative action, for submission to the Subcommission at its fifty-fifth session. Concerned at the extent of discrimination in relation to women married to foreigners, the Subcommission decided to request Vladimir Kartashkin to prepare a working paper on the rights of women married to foreigners, to be submitted to the Subcommission at its fifty-fifth session (decision on women and human rights; see E/CN.4/Sub.2/2002/L.36). It also decided to request Françoise Hampson to submit to the Subcommission at its fifty-fifth session an extended working paper on reservations to human rights treaties (decision on reservations to human rights treaties; see E/CN.4/Sub.2/2002/L.30).

III. Long-term programme of work regarding general recommendations

23. At its twenty-seventh session, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women requested the secretariat to provide a report on its current schedule for general recommendations for its twenty-eighth session, in January 2003.

24. At earlier sessions, the Committee had adopted a long-term programme of work regarding its elaboration of general recommendations. At its eleventh session, in 1992, members of the Committee volunteered to prepare draft general recommendations on specific articles of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women for the consideration of the Committee at its twelfth session,[8] and at the twelfth session additional members volunteered to prepare general comments and recommendations on articles 2 to 8, 11 and 12 of the Convention. Also at its eleventh session, in accordance with its long-term programme of work, the Committee concluded general recommendation 19, concerning violence against women. General recommendation 21, concerning equality in marriage and family relations, was concluded at the Committee's thirteenth session (1994);[9] general recommendation 23, on women and public life, was adopted at the sixteenth session and included in the Committee's report on its seventeenth session;[10] and general recommendation 24, on article 12 of the Convention, women and health, was adopted by the Committee at its twentieth session (1999).[11] Also at its twentieth session, the Committee decided that articles 2 and 4 would be taken up in its long-term programme of work on general recommendations and that work on a general recommendation on article 4 would begin at its twenty-second session, in January 2000.[12] At its seventeenth session, the Committee had agreed that general recommendations on articles 2 and 4 would be formulated separately.[13]

25. At its twenty-third session, in 2000, the Committee decided to prepare a general recommendation on article 4, paragraph 1, of the Convention, on temporary special measures aimed at accelerating de facto equality between men and women, bearing in mind the Committee's three-stage process for the preparation of general recommendations adopted at its seventeenth session.[14] The Committee began discussion of a general recommendation on article 4, paragraph 1, at its twenty-fourth session (2001), and at the Committee's request, the Secretariat provided to the Committee at its twenty-fifth session an analysis of the Committee's approach to article 4, paragraph 1, in its consideration of reports of States parties. A member of the Committee prepared a background paper on article 4, paragraph 1, which was circulated to members prior to the Committee's twenty-sixth session (2002). At its twenty-seventh session (2002), the Committee held an open discussion on article 4, paragraph 1, of the Convention with representatives of United Nations system bodies and non-governmental organizations.

26. At its twenty-seventh session, the Committee agreed to formulate a general recommendation, based on its statement to the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, and also a general recommendation on the right of older women to non-discrimination under the Convention, drawing on States parties' reports, its statement to the Second World Assembly on Ageing and the Madrid Plan of Action adopted by that Assembly.[15]

27. Several entities from within the United Nations system have invited the Committee, when considering its long-term programme of work for general recommendations, to take certain issues into account. In its resolutions 2000/19 (fifty-second session), 2001/14 (fifty-third session) and 2002/27 (fifty-fourth session), on the report of the Working Group on Contemporary Forms of Slavery, the Subcommission recommended that the Committee include in its general comments and recommendations an item concerning contemporary forms of slavery. In resolutions 2000/19 and 2001/14, the Subcommission invited the Committee to

elaborate general recommendations in order to clarify reporting procedures with regard to victims of trafficking, in particular for purposes of prostitution and exploitation of the prostitution of others, as provided in the 1949 Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others. A similar resolution had been adopted by the Subcommission at its fiftieth session (resolution 1998/19).

28. In its resolution 1999/15, adopted at its fifty-first session, on women and the right to development, the Subcommission invited the Committee to pay special attention to women's economic rights, such as the rights to land, property and an adequate standard of living, including adequate housing, when examining States parties' reports, and to explore the possibility of adopting a general recommendation on that theme as it related, inter alia, to the provisions of article 14 of the Convention, with a view to clarifying the obligations of States parties to the Convention in this respect. A similar resolution had been adopted by the Subcommission at its fiftieth session (resolution 1998/15).

29. The Commission on the Status of Women, in its resolution 42/3, adopted at its forty-second session (1998), invited the Committee to develop a general recommendation on women and migration, while both the Commission on Human Rights, in its resolution 1998/17, adopted at its fifty-fourth session (1998), and the General Assembly, in its resolutions 54/138 (1999) and 56/131 (2001), have encouraged the Committee to consider developing a general recommendation on the situation of women migrant workers.

30. The Committee may wish to review its long-term programme for the preparation of general recommendations.

IV. Consideration of reports by the Committee and constructive dialogue with States parties

31. At its twenty-seventh session, the Committee decided that in cases in which a member of the Committee is a national of a State party that is presenting its report, the Committee's decision 18/III, on the non-participation of that member in any part of the consideration of the State party's report, would be explained by the Chairperson at the beginning of the meeting at which that report would be considered. The contribution of that member to the work of the Committee would be acknowledged.

32. The Committee decided that in the consideration of periodic reports, questions by experts would be clustered in accordance with the four substantive parts of the Convention. After experts had posed questions on each cluster, the State party concerned would be given an opportunity to respond. Experts would seek to focus on issues identified by the pre-session working group, and would avoid intervening under each cluster. The Committee also decided that interventions by experts would be limited to five minutes and that the time limit would be enforced flexibly, but monitored by a speech timer.

33. The Committee further decided that the presentation of initial reports would be limited to a maximum of 45 minutes and that of periodic reports to a maximum of 30 minutes, and that these time limits would be reflected in the Committee's programme of work and the *Journal of the United Nations*. The closed meeting of

the Committee to discuss the content of the concluding comments would be scheduled for a minimum of 30 minutes, which would be reflected in the Committee's programme of work and in the *Journal*.

V. Reports to be considered by the Committee at future sessions

34. At its twenty-seventh session, the Committee drew up the list of States parties whose reports would be considered at future sessions. With respect to its twenty-ninth session, in June and July 2003, the Committee decided to consider the combined initial and second periodic report of Albania; the second periodic reports of Morocco and Slovenia; the combined third and fourth periodic report of France; the fourth and fifth periodic reports of Japan; and the combined fourth and fifth periodic report of Ecuador.[16] Costa R a, which had been scheduled to present its combined initial, second and third periodic report at the twenty-eighth session, submitted a fourth periodic report in late 2002, and has indicated that it wishes its combined initial, second and third periodic report and its fourth periodic report to be taken up together at the twenty-ninth session of the Committee. In finalizing the list of States parties whose reports are to be considered at the twenty-ninth session, the Committee may wish to take account of the fact that the combined initial, second and third periodic report of Angola, the combined initial and second periodic report of Benin, the combined initial, second, third, fourth and fifth periodic report of Brazil, the initial report of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the combined initial and second periodic report of Kuwait have been submitted.

35. In finalizing the list of reports to be considered at the thirtieth session and proposing those to be considered at future sessions, the Committee's attention is drawn to annex II below, which contains a list of States parties whose reports have been submitted but not yet considered, including the combined second and third periodic report of Equatorial Guinea, the combined fourth and fifth periodic report of Ethiopia, the third periodic report of Israel, the second periodic report of Kyrgyzstan, the second periodic report of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, and the fifth periodic report of New Zealand.

VI. Efforts to encourage universal ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, ratification of the Optional Protocol and acceptance of the amendment to article 20, paragraph 1, of the Convention

36. The Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women and the Director of the Division for the Advancement of Women have continued their efforts to encourage universal ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, acceptance of the Optional Protocol and the amendment to article 20, paragraph 1, of the Convention, and the fulfilment of reporting obligations. Notably, in May 2002, in collaboration with the Office of Legal Affairs and the United Nations Children's Fund, the Office of the Special Adviser and the Division organized a panel discussion during the twenty-

seventh special session of the General Assembly, on children, which sought to encourage signature and ratification of international treaties relevant to the rights of women and children, in particular the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and its Optional Protocol.

37. At the informal meeting of the Committee with States parties in June 2002, the Special Adviser and the Director of the Division provided information on technical assistance available through the Division to States parties for implementation of the Convention, and particularly the fulfilment of the reporting obligation set out in article 18 of the Convention. In May 2002, the Chief of the Women's Rights Section participated in a training workshop in Sarajevo on reporting under the Convention. In November 2002, in collaboration with the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, the Division convened a training workshop for States parties that had not as yet submitted initial reports. The workshop was preceded by a judicial colloquium on the domestic application of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

38. The Division collaborated with the Inter-Parliamentary Union in the preparation of a handbook for parliamentarians on the Convention and the Optional Protocol, and is preparing a comprehensive training package on them.

Notes

[1] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 40* (A/57/40), annex III.A.

[2] See CCPR/C/3/Rev.6 and Corr.1. Rule 70A provides that, where the Committee has specified as a priority concern certain aspects of its concluding observations on a State party's report under rule 70, paragraph 5, it shall establish a procedure to consider replies by the State party on those aspects, and to decide the consequent action, including the date set for the next periodic report, that may be appropriate.

[3] See General Assembly resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.

[4] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 40* (A/57/40), annex III.B.

[5] Article 2 reads as follows:

> "1. Each State Party to the present Covenant undertakes to respect and to ensure to all individuals within its territory and subject to its jurisdiction the rights recognized in the present Covenant, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.
>
> "2. Where not already provided for by existing legislative or other measures, each State party to the present Covenant undertakes to take the necessary steps, in accordance with its constitutional processes and with the provisions of the present Covenant, to adopt such legislative or other measures as may be necessary to give effect to the rights recognized in the present Covenant.
>
> "3. Each State Party to the present Covenant undertakes:
>
> "(a) To ensure that any person whose rights or freedoms as herein recognized are violated shall have an effective remedy, notwithstanding that the violation has been committed by persons acting in an official capacity;

"(b) To ensure that any person claiming such a remedy shall have his right thereto determined by competent judicial, administrative or legislative authorities, or by any other competent authority provided for by the legal system of the State, and to develop the possibilities of judicial remedy;

"(c) To ensure that the competent authorities shall enforce such remedies when granted."

[6] General Assembly resolution 44/25, annex.

[7] The report on the management review of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights conducted by the Office of Internal Oversight Services during 2002, transmitted by the Secretary-General to the General Assembly at its fifty-seventh session, also recommends that the High Commissioner consistently pursue consultations with the treaty bodies on the modalities for consolidating reporting under various treaty obligations into a single national report with a view to achieving a steady progress towards this goal (A/57/488, para. 63).

[8] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 38* (A/47/38), paras. 456-458.

[9] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 38* (A/49/38).

[10] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-second Session, Supplement No. 38* (A/52/38/Rev.1), part two.

[11] Ibid., *Fifty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 38* (A/54/38/Rev.1), part one.

[12] Ibid., para. 434.

[13] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-second Session, Supplement No. 38* (A/52/38/Rev.1), part two, para. 482.

[14] Ibid., *Fifty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 38* (A/55/38), part two, chap. I, sect. A, decision 23/III.

[15] Ibid., *Fifty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 38* (A/57/38), part two, para. 379.

[16] Ibid., para. 367 (b).

Annex I

States parties whose reports are five years or more overdue as at 8 November 2002

State party	*Date due*
A. Initial reports	
Bahamas	5 November 1994
Bhutan	30 September 1982
Bosnia and Herzegovina	1 October 1994
Botswana	12 September 1997
Cambodia	14 November 1993
Cape Verde	3 September 1982
Central African Republic	21 July 1992
Chad	9 July 1996
Comoros	30 November 1995
Côte d'Ivoire	17 January 1997
Dominica	3 September 1982
Eritrea	5 October 1996
Gambia	16 May 1994
Grenada	29 September 1991
Guinea-Bissau	22 September 1986
Haiti	3 September 1982
Lao People's Democratic Republic	13 September 1982
Latvia	14 May 1993
Lesotho	21 September 1996
Liberia	16 August 1985
Malaysia	4 August 1996
Pakistan	11 April 1997
Papua New Guinea	11 February 1996
Saint Lucia	7 November 1983
Samoa	25 October 1993

State party	*Date due*
Seychelles	4 June 1993
Sierra Leone	11 December 1989
Tajikistan	25 October 1994
The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	17 February 1995
Togo	26 October 1984
Vanuatu	8 October 1996
B. Second periodic reports	
Bhutan	30 September 1986
Bolivia	8 July 1995
Burundi	7 February 1997
Cape Verde	3 September 1986
Central African Republic	21 July 1996
Croatia	9 October 1997
Dominica	3 September 1986
Gabon	20 February 1988
Grenada	20 September 1995
Guinea-Bissau	22 September 1990
Haiti	3 September 1986
Lao People's Democratic Republic	13 September 1986
Latvia	14 May 1997
Liberia	16 August 1989
Madagascar	16 April 1994
Malawi	11 April 1992
Mali	10 October 1990
Nepal	22 May 1996
Saint Lucia	7 November 1987
Samoa	25 October 1997
Seychelles	4 June 1997
Sierra Leone	11 December 1993

State party	*Date due*
Togo	26 October 1988
Zimbabwe	12 June 1996
C. Third periodic reports	
Bhutan	30 September 1990
Cape Verde	3 September 1990
Cyprus	22 August 1994
Dominica	3 September 1990
Gabon	20 February 1992
Ghana	1 February 1995
Guinea-Bissau	22 September 1994
Guyana	3 September 1990
Haiti	3 September 1990
Lao People's Democratic Republic	13 September 1990
Liberia	16 August 1993
Malawi	11 April 1996
Mali	10 October 1994
Mauritius	8 August 1993
Paraguay	6 May 1996
Saint Lucia	7 November 1991
Senegal	7 March 1994
Togo	26 October 1992
D. Fourth periodic reports	
Australia	27 August 1996
Belarus	3 September 1994
Bhutan	30 September 1994
Bulgaria	10 March 1995
Cape Verde	3 September 1994
Dominica	3 September 1994
Gabon	20 February 1996

State party	*Date due*
Guinea	8 September 1995
Guyana	3 September 1994
Haiti	3 September 1994
Honduras	2 April 1996
Indonesia	13 October 1997
Lao People's Democratic Republic	13 September 1994
Liberia	16 August 1997
Mauritius	8 August 1997
Panama	28 November 1994
Poland	3 September 1994
Rwanda	3 September 1994
Saint Lucia	7 November 1995
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	3 September 1994
Togo	26 October 1996
Uruguay	8 November 1994
Venezuela	1 June 1996

Annex II

States parties whose reports have been submitted but not yet considered by the Committee as at 8 November 2002

State party	*Date due*	*Date received*	*Document symbol*
A. Initial reports			
Albania[a, b]	10 June 1995	20 May 2002	CEDAW/C/ALB/1-2
Angola	17 October 1987	2 May 2002	CEDAW/C/AGO/1-3
Benin	11 April 1993	27 June 2002	CEDAW/C/BEN/1-2
Brazil	2 March 1985	7 November 2002	CEDAW/C/BRA/1-5
Democratic People's Republic of Korea	27 March 2002	11 September 2002	CEDAW/C/PRK/1
Kuwait	2 October 1995	15 August 2002	CEDAW/C/KWT/1-2
B. Second periodic reports			
Albania[a, b]	10 June 1995	20 May 2002	CEDAW/C/ALB/1-2
Angola	17 October 1991	2 May 2002	CEDAW/C/AGO/1-3
Benin	11 April 1997	27 June 2002	CEDAW/C/BEN/1-2
Brazil	2 March 1989	7 November 2002	CEDAW/C/BRA/1-5
Equatorial Guinea[b]	22 November 1989	6 January 1994	CEDAW/C/GNQ/2-3
Kuwait	2 October 1999	15 August 2002	CEDAW/C/KWT/1-2
Kyrgyzstan	12 March 2002	25 September 2002	CEDAW/C/KRZ/2
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya[b]	15 June 1990	18 February 1999	CEDAW/C/LBY/2
Morocco[a, b]	21 July 1998	29 February 2000	CEDAW/C/MOR/2
Slovenia[a, b]	5 August 1997	26 April 1999	CEDAW/C/SVN/2
C. Third periodic reports			
Angola	17 October 1995	2 May 2002	CEDAW/C/AGO/1-3
Brazil	2 March 1993	7 November 2002	CEDAW/C/BRA/1-5
Equatorial Guinea[b]	22 November 1993	6 January 1994	CEDAW/C/GNQ/2-3
France[a, b]	13 January 1993	5 October 1999	CEDAW/C/FRA/3
Israel[b]	2 November 2000	22 October 2001	CEDAW/C/ISR/3
D. Fourth periodic reports			
Brazil	2 March 1997	7 November 2002	CEDAW/C/BRA/1-5
Ecuador[a, b]	9 December 1994	8 January 2002	CEDAW/C/ECU/4-5
Ethiopia	10 October 1994	25 September 2002	CEDAW/C/ETH/4-5
France[a, b]	12 January 1997	5 October 1999	CEDAW/C/FRA/3-4 and Corr.1
Japan[a, b]	25 July 1998	24 July 1998	CEDAW/C/JPN/4

State party	*Date due*	*Date received*	*Document symbol*
E. Fifth periodic reports			
Brazil	2 March 2001	7 November 2002	CEDAW/C/BRA/1-5
Ecuador[a, b]	9 December 1998	8 January 2002	CEDAW/C/ECU/4-5
Ethiopia	10 October 1998	25 September 2002	CEDAW/C/ETH/4-5
France[a, b]	13 January 2001	27 August 2002	CEDAW/C/FRA/5
Japan[a, b]	25 July 2002	13 September 2002	CEDAW/C/JPN/5
New Zealand	9 February 2002	7 October 2002	CEDAW/C/NZL/5

[a] Report to be considered by the Committee at its twenty-ninth session, to be held in New York from 30 June-18 July 2003.

[b] Report has been translated, reproduced and made available in all official languages.

Annex III

States parties that have signed, ratified or acceded to the Optional Protocol to the Convention

States parties	*Date signed*	*Date of ratification or accession*
1. Andorra	9 July 2001	14 October 2002
2. Argentina	28 February 2000	
3. Austria	10 December 1999	6 September 2000
4. Azerbaijan	6 June 2000	1 June 2001
5. Bangladesh	6 September 2000	6 September 2000
6. Belarus	29 April 2002	
7. Belgium	10 December 1999	
8. Benin	25 May 2000	
9. Bolivia	10 December 1999	27 September 2000
10. Bosnia and Herzegovina	7 September 2000	4 September 2002
11. Brazil	13 March 2001	28 June 2002
12. Bulgaria	6 June 2000	
13. Burkina Faso	16 November 2001	
14. Burundi	13 November 2001	
15. Canada		18 October 2002[a]
16. Cambodia	11 November 2001	
17. Chile	10 December 1999	
18. Colombia	10 December 1999	
19. Costa Rica	10 December 1999	20 September 2001
20. Croatia	5 June 2000	7 March 2001
21. Cuba	17 March 2000	
22. Cyprus	8 February 2001	26 April 2002
23. Czech Republic	10 December 1999	26 February 2001
24. Denmark	10 December 1999	31 May 2000
25. Dominican Republic	14 March 2000	10 August 2001
26. Ecuador	10 December 1999	5 February 2002
27. El Salvador	4 April 2001	
28. Finland	10 December 1999	29 December 2000
29. France	10 December 1999	9 June 2000
30. Georgia		1 August 2002[a]
31. Germany	10 December 1999	15 January 2002
32. Ghana	24 February 2000	
33. Greece	10 December 1999	24 January 2002
34. Guatemala	7 September 2000	9 May 2002
35. Guinea-Bissau	12 September 2000	
36. Hungary		22 December 2000[a]

States parties	*Date signed*	*Date of ratification or accession*
37. Iceland	10 December 1999	6 March 2001
38. Indonesia	28 February 2000	
39. Ireland	7 September 2000	7 September 2000
40. Italy	10 December 1999	22 September 2000
41. Kazakhstan	6 September 2000	24 August 2001
42. Kyrgyzstan		22 July 2002[a]
43. Lesotho	6 September 2000	
44. Liechtenstein	10 December 1999	24 October 2001
45. Lithuania	8 September 2000	
46. Luxembourg	10 December 1999	
47. Madagascar	7 September 2000	
48. Malawi	7 September 2000	
49. Mali		5 December 2000[a]
50. Mauritius	11 November 2001	
51. Mexico	10 December 1999	15 March 2002
52. Mongolia	7 September 2000	28 March 2002
53. Namibia	19 May 2000	26 May 2000
54. Nepal	18 December 2001	
55. Netherlands[b]	10 December 1999	22 May 2002
56. New Zealand[c]	7 September 2000	7 September 2000
57. Nigeria	8 September 2000	
58. Norway	10 December 1999	5 March 2002
59. Panama	9 June 2000	9 May 2001
60. Paraguay	28 December 1999	14 May 2001
61. Peru	22 December 2000	9 April 2001
62. Philippines	21 March 2000	
63. Portugal	16 February 2000	26 April 2002
64. Romania	6 September 2000	
65. Russian Federation	8 May 2001	
66. Sao Tome and Principe	6 September 2000	
67. Senegal	10 December 1999	26 May 2000
68. Seychelles	22 July 2002	
69. Sierra Leone	8 September 2000	
70. Slovakia	5 June 2000	17 November 2000
71. Slovenia	10 December 1999	
72. Solomon Islands		6 May 2002[a]
73. Spain	14 March 2000	6 July 2001
74. Sri Lanka		15 October 2002[a]
75. Sweden	10 December 1999	
76. Tajikistan	7 September 2000	

States parties	*Date signed*	*Date of ratification or accession*
77. Thailand	14 June 2000	14 June 2000
78. The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	3 April 2000	
79. Turkey	8 September 2000	
80. Ukraine	7 September 2000	
81. Uruguay	9 May 2000	26 July 2001
82. Venezuela	17 March 2000	13 May 2002

[a] Indicates accession.
[b] For the Kingdom in Europe, the Netherlands Antilles and Aruba.
[c] With a declaration to the effect that "consistent with the constitutional status of Tokelau and taking into account its commitment to the development of self-government through an act of self-determination under the Charter of the United Nations, this ratification shall not extend to Tokelau unless and until a Declaration to this effect is lodged by the Government of New Zealand with the depositary on the basis of appropriate consultation with that territory".

Annex IV

States parties that have deposited with the Secretary-General instruments of acceptance of the amendment to article 20, paragraph 1, of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

States parties	*Acceptance date*
Andorra	14 October 2002
Australia	4 June 1998
Austria	11 September 2000
Brazil	5 March 1997
Canada	3 November 1997
Chile	8 May 1998
China	10 July 2002
Cyprus	30 July 2002
Denmark	12 March 1996
Egypt	2 August 2001
Finland	18 March 1996
France	8 August 1997
Germany	25 February 2002
Guatemala	3 June 1999
Iceland	8 May 2002
Italy	31 May 1996
Jordan	11 January 2002
Lesotho	12 November 2001
Liechtenstein	15 April 1997
Madagascar	19 July 1996
Maldives	7 February 2002
Mali	20 June 2002
Malta	5 March 1997
Mauritius	29 October 2002
Mexico	16 September 1996
Mongolia	19 December 1997
Netherlands*	10 December 1997
New Zealand	26 September 1996
Niger	1 May 2002
Norway	29 March 1996
Panama	5 November 1996
Portugal	8 January 2002
Republic of Korea	12 August 1996
Sweden	17 July 1996

States parties	*Acceptance date*
Switzerland	2 December 1997
Turkey	9 December 1999
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland[b]	19 November 1997

[a] For the Kingdom in Europe, the Netherlands Antilles and Aruba.
[b] For the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the Isle of Man, the British Virgin Islands and the Turks and Caicos Islands.

Annex V

States that have not ratified or acceded to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women as at 8 November 2002

Africa

Sao Tome and Principe

Somalia

Sudan

Swaziland

Asia and the Pacific

Afghanistan

Brunei Darussalam

Iran (Islamic Republic of)

Kiribati

Marshall Islands

Micronesia (Federated States of)

Nauru

Oman

Palau

Qatar

Syrian Arab Republic

Tonga

United Arab Emirates

Western European and other States

Holy See

Monaco

San Marino

United States of America

Annex VI

Extract from the report of the first inter-committee meeting of the human rights treaty bodies (HRI/ICM/2002/3)

"Points of agreement reached by participants

"47. The meeting agreed upon the following points:[1]

"*General observations and recommendations*

"48. Recalling the United Nations Millennium Declaration, States should work towards the universal ratification of the six core United Nations human rights treaties.

"49. States parties to United Nations human rights treaties should report in strict compliance with the periodicity set out in those treaties.

"50. Taking account of the universality, indivisibility and interdependence of human rights, treaty bodies should work together in a complementary way in order to underline the holistic nature of the human rights treaty framework. Collaboration should be enhanced through, inter alia:

(a) Collaborative days of general debate or general discussion;

(b) Formulation, where appropriate, of joint statements, particularly with respect to United Nations conferences and summits;

(c) Formulation of joint general comments/recommendations by two or more treaty bodies; the subject of such general comments could be discussed in future Inter-Committee Meetings, where appropriate;

(d) Circulation of draft general comments/recommendations to other treaty bodies for input;

(e) Cross-reference, where appropriate, to pertinent comments of other treaty bodies in concluding observations/comments;

(f) Information from and input of NGOs, which is critical to the effective functioning of the United Nations treaty body system.

"51. Treaty body secretariats should assume a stronger role in ensuring greater consultation amongst treaty bodies.

"*Recommendations addressed to the treaty bodies*

"52. Treaty bodies should devise a framework to provide States parties whose reporting obligations under several human rights treaties are almost simultaneous with the option of staggering the dates of their appearance before the different treaty bodies.

"53. Treaty bodies should seek to identify the date of submission of a State party's subsequent periodic report clearly in the concluding observations/ comments on the previous report of the State party; where appropriate, this date may allow for consolidation of more than one reporting obligations.

"54. Treaty bodies should elaborate criteria to govern circumstances in which the reports of States parties may be examined in the absence of representatives of the State party concerned.

"55. Treaty bodies should consider the possibility of examining the situation in a State party in the absence of a report where that State party's initial/periodic report is long overdue.

"56. Treaty bodies should convene meetings and establish a dialogue with representatives of States parties on a country-by-country basis, in order to explore reasons for failure to meet reporting obligations and encourage the submission of reports.

"57. As a general rule, all treaty bodies should make information submitted to them by NGOs available to the States parties concerned.

"58. Treaty bodies should seek to convene pre-sessional and in-sessional working groups in order to formulate lists of issues and questions on the reports of States parties.

"59. Lists of issues and questions, which should be as concise and precise as possible, should be transmitted to States parties well in advance of the examination of their reports.

"60. Lists of issues and questions should ask for disaggregated and comparative data, spanning the time between the examination of the previous report and the examination of the report on which a list of issues has been drawn up.

"61. Treaty bodies should seek to formulate concluding observations/comments which reflect as closely as possible the contents of the dialogue with the State party concern[ed].

"62. Treaty bodies should seek to include concerns and their pertinent recommendations in the same section of the concluding observations/comments.

"63. Treaty bodies should include a section on 'factors and difficulties affecting the implementation of the Convention/Covenant' with caution and where appropriate in concluding observations/comments on the reports of States parties.

"64. Treaty bodies should formulate country-specific concluding observations/comments, incorporating realistic recommendations.

"65. Treaty bodies should formulate concluding observations/comments which include concise and concrete recommendations, to allow for follow-up.

"66. Treaty bodies should ensure that their concluding observations/comments are made available first to the States parties concerned.

"67. Treaty bodies should make available any comments by States parties on concluding observations/comments on their reports as public documents, as appropriate, including in electronic format.

"68. Except where the correction of factual errors is concerned, treaty bodies should not engage in discussion with States parties on the form or content of concluding observations/comments.

"69. Treaty bodies should develop procedures for follow-up on concluding observations/comments; the modalities of such procedures, which should be as transparent as possible, should be left to each Committee.

"*Recommendations addressed to States parties*

"70. States parties should consider establishing, where appropriate, a reporting unit responsible for the preparation of reports required by human rights treaties.

"71. Donors should coordinate technical assistance activities directed at reporting obligations.

"*Recommendation addressed to NGOs*

"72. NGOs should submit their reports to the treaty bodies well in advance of the examination of the relevant State party's report; NGO reports should not be submitted at the last minute.

"*Recommendations addressed to the United Nations*

"73. Efforts should be made to ensure that all treaty bodies that wish to do so are able to convene pre-sessional working groups.

"74. Treaty body secretariats should institute a harmonized system of reporting reminders to States parties.

"75. OHCHR should develop and implement a comprehensive technical assistance programme on reporting under the existing human rights instruments to create an enabling environment at the national level to enhance the implementation of substantive obligations and fulfilment of reporting obligations.

"76. The secretariat should develop programmes to provide technical assistance to States parties to support them, at their request, in meeting their reporting obligations.

"77. Technical assistance programmes to support States parties in meeting their reporting obligations is most appropriately provided at the country level.

"78. Technical assistance provided at the regional or subregional level should concentrate on implementation of the instruments and concluding observations/comments.

"79. The United Nations and its specialized agencies, funds and programmes should coordinate technical assistance activities directed at reporting obligations.

"80. Treaty body members should participate in technical assistance activities directed at reporting obligations.

"*Recommendations addressed to the treaty bodies and the United Nations Secretariat*

"81. The second Inter-Committee meeting should be convened in two years to discuss issues that remain outstanding from the first Inter-Committee meeting,

implementation of recommendations of that meeting and an appropriate substantive theme such as non-discrimination.

"82. The fifteenth meeting of chairpersons of the human rights treaty bodies in 2003 should decide on the agenda of the second Inter-Committee meeting on the basis of the views of each treaty body.

"*Notes*

"[1] The following issues remain outstanding for the second Inter-Committee meeting:

(a) The establishment of a generalized system of flexible periodicity, or general acceptance of combined reports;

(b) Allowing for the consolidation of outstanding reporting obligations, exceptionally and as an interim measure, to address both the backlog of reports awaiting review and to encourage States parties to meet their reporting obligations;

(c) The appointment of a special rapporteur on overdue reports. This should be left to each treaty body to decide;

(d) The preparation and submission of 'single' (omnibus) reports as an appropriate way of assisting States parties in meeting their reporting obligations;

(e) The issue of harmonized timing of the release of concluding observations;

(f) Whether to allow treaty bodies to identify concerns in concluding observations/comments that were not raised in the dialogue with the State party;

(g) Providing CEDAW with the option of formulating lists of issues on States parties presenting initial reports;

(h) Recommending to the Department of Public Information that it address the matter of expressions of public concern over the accuracy of DPI press releases by involving treaty body members in strategies to ensure that its treaty-related output is accurate;

(i) The confidentiality requirements of United Nations entities with regard to information provided to treaty bodies."